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978-0-521-89676-4 - The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640

Arnold Hunt

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THE ART OF HEARING

This ground-breaking study of early modern English preaching is the first to take full account of the sermon as heard by the listener as well as uttered by the preacher. It draws on a wide range of printed and manuscript sources, but also seeks to read behind the texts in order to reconstruct what was actually delivered from the pulpit, with due attention to the differences between oral, written and printed versions. In showing how sermons were interpreted and appropriated by their hearers, often in ways that their authors never intended, it poses wider questions about the transmission of religious and political ideas in the post-Reformation period. Offering a richer understanding of sermons as complex and ambiguous texts, and opening up new avenues for their interpretation, it will be essential reading for all students of the religious and cultural history of early modern England.

ARNOLD HUNT is a Curator of Manuscripts at the British Library, and a Senior Research Fellow at King's College, London.

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